

REMARKS

Claims 10 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for reciting “back of the support.” The Examiner contends that which side of the support is the “back” is not clearly identified. Applicants’ have amended the claims to remove this phrase from the claims. Accordingly, this rejection is now moot. Further, since the Examiner admitted that this claim term did not have any patentable effect because it is unclear what side is the “back” of the support, only cursory review is required and this amendment should be entered after final rejection.

Claims 1-5, 7, 8, 11-15 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Platzer as optionally evidenced by Kelly and Pears. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 claims a photosensitive resin laminate having a light transmission of not less than 60% that includes a photosensitive resin layer that has a thickness of not less than 500 μm . Independent claim 11 claims a photosensitive resin laminate that satisfies the following formula (1):

$$\{(A-B)/A\} \times 100 \leq 15 \quad (1)$$

wherein A is a total light transmission (%) of the support and B is a total light transmission (%) of the photosensitive resin laminate and the laminate includes a photosensitive resin layer that has a thickness of not less than 500 μm .

In the last office action, the Examiner contends that the claimed light transmission properties are inherently disclosed in Example 1 of Platzer because “the photosensitive layers must remain clear enough after imaging to allow the colored layer to be seen in the visible range.” However, the Examiner does not show that that photosensitive resin layer has a thickness of not less than 500 μm as claimed.

In Platzer it is necessary to make the (uncolored) photopolymerizable layer (corresponding to the photosensitive resin layer of the present invention) thin, so that the

color of the (colored) polymerizable layer can be confirmed. Platzer fails to specifically state the thickness of the photopolymerizable layer; however, simple calculations based on Platzer's disclosure show that the thickness of this layer must be far thinner than 500 μm as claimed.

Example 1 of Platzer states that the photopolymerizable layer was coated to a weight of 0.3 g/m^2 . In addition, Platzer's more general disclosure at column 5, lines 53-55, states that the photopolymerizable layer has a layer weight of 0.05 to 3 g/m^2 , preferably from about 0.02 to about 0.5 g/m^2 . These weights can be converted into a thickness by dividing the disclosed (weight/per unit area) by the specific gravity of the photopolymerizable resin. Even if we consider the thickest layer disclosed in Platzer, the one having a coating weight of 3 g/m^2 , and assume a relatively low specific gravity of about 1 g/cm^3 for Platzer's photopolymerizable resin,¹ such a layer ends up having a thickness of about $3 \mu\text{m}$, well below the minimum thickness claimed by applicants. Since Platzer does not disclose or even suggest using a photosensitive resin layer with the claimed thickness, the rejection of claims 1 and 11 in view of Platzer should be withdrawn. The rejection of claims 2-5, 7, 8, 12-15 and 17, which depend from claims 1 and 11, should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

Claims 1-5, 8-15, 19 and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Vreeland. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The present application claims priority to Japanese Patent Application Nos. 2000-225650 filed July 26 2000; 2000-227541 filed July 27, 2000; 2000-243126 filed August 10, 2000 and 2000-336217 filed November 2, 2000.

¹ Applicants propose such a hypothetical density for this comparison because a lower density will give a greater layer thickness for a given layer weight. Generally, the specific gravity of a photosensitive resin layer is not less than 1.1 g/cm^3 . For comparison, the specific gravity of the photopolymerizable resin used by Applicants is 1.18.

Applicants have previously transmitted these priority documents to the Patent Office. Sworn English translations of each of these documents accompany this amendment. Accordingly, applicants are entitled to the benefit of a priority date no later than November 2, 2000, the latest date of the priority documents. Since this date is prior to Vreeland's first filing date of November 13, 2000, Vreeland is no longer a valid prior art reference and this rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 7, 11-13 and 17 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hephher. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection on the same grounds as presented with respect to Platzer.

Claims 1 and 11 claim a photosensitive resin layer that has a thickness of not less than 500 μm . The Examiner contends that Hephher inherently discloses this claimed thickness by disclosing a photopolymerizable layer with a weight per unit area in the range of 25-35 g/m^2 . The Examiner states that this weight per unit area corresponds to a thickness of 1 mm or greater.

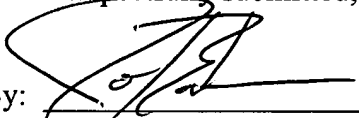
By converting the disclosed weight per unit areas into a thickness, as was done for Platzer, the thickness of the photopolymerizable layer turns out to be no greater than 25 μm - 35 μm , well below 500 μm as claimed. Applicants also respectfully submit that for the coating weights disclosed in Hephher to yield a layer 1 mm thick as contended by the Examiner, the resin would have to have a density of 0.025-0.035 g/cm^3 , which is impossibly low. Since Hephher fails to disclose or suggest a photosensitive resin layer with the claimed thickness, the rejection of claims 1 and 11 should be withdrawn. The rejection of claims 2, 3, 7, 11-13 and 17, which depend from claims 1 and 11, should be withdrawn for at least the same reasons.

For the foregoing reasons, early action allowing claims 1-20 in this application is solicited. If the Examiner has any questions about the calculations referred to in this

response, applicants respectfully request her to telephone their undersigned attorney to discuss how the calculations were carried out.

In the event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief including extensions of time and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 358362010500.

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Respectfully submitted,

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